

# LAUREN

21.

## ACT II

## (1<sup>st</sup> SCENE)

### EXT. MANHATTAN SKYLINE - DAWN

The SUN creeps above towers of steel and concrete. The hustle and bustle of the Lower Eastside. A new day has begun.

Then oddly, the SOUND of SEAGULLS and CRASHING WAVES rise --

A MAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
Listen... listen to the sound of the  
breeze... and birds.... the waves...  
the ocean rocking you gently...  
softly... and quietly... to sleep.

SLAM TO:

### INT. A LOWER EASTSIDE APARTMENT - DAWN

Ray laying on his back -- EYES WIDE OPEN -- staring at the ceiling. He's not sleeping. The alarm clock reads 7:30 AM. The man's voice and the Ocean sounds come from his CD player. Ray holds the CD up. JUST RELAX -- GUIDED MEDITATION FOR SLEEP.

Fuck it. Ray throws the CD on the floor -- gets out of bed.

### LIVING ROOM

We get a better look at the place. It's not big, not clean, not very fragrant. But there is a certain personality to it that reflects Ray: books on the walls, weird furnishings, modern kitchen, and golf magazines everywhere.

Ray grabs Visine off the counter -- puts a drop or two in each eye. He reaches for his overcoat, checks his hair in a hall mirror and walks out the door.

### INT. BROWNSTONE APARTMENT - MORNING

Sunlight streams through the windows. A grandfather clock reads 8:58 AM. LAUREN (32) walks past it. Lauren is a ray of light, beautiful, deep oceanic eyes. She's on her way --

### EXT. BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS

-- to grab the paper. When she opens the door she's surprised to find RAY standing there. Ray awkwardly waves.

RAY  
Hey. I brought you some milk.

Ray indeed has a gallon of milk he offers to Lauren.

RAY  
In case you were out.

Lauren  
&  
Ray  
START

LAUREN

You know you're not supposed to be here.

RAY

Our anniversary's on Friday -

LAUREN

Anniversaries are for couples. We're not a couple.

RAY

Well sure, if you mean we don't see each other or talk, but that's getting kind'a technical about it, don't you think?

LAUREN

Ray, seriously, what do you want?

Ray looks at her eyes, nose, her lips, her neck -- this is the most beautiful woman in the world.

RAY

I just wanted to see you.

Lauren's eyes soften, but there's so much water under the bridge.

LAUREN

Look, Ray, you're not supposed to be here. You know that.

RAY

No, Lauren, I don't know that. Why do you keep saying that?

TED (O.S.)

What the hell are you doing here!?

Walking in from the other room is the anti-Ray: TED BARKER (35), Lauren's Wall Street, way-together man. It's clear Ray's never seen this man in his life, but contradictorily, Ted says --

TED

You stop by to punch me again!?

RAY

Who the hell is this guy?

LAUREN

It's Ted, Ray. You came here a month ago and punched him, remember?

RAY

No, I ah... I don't.  
(then)  
Did I hit him hard?

LAUREN  
Ray, stop playing games.

TED  
Lauren, get rid of him or I'm  
calling the cops!

Ted storms off into the house. Ray looks to Lauren

RAY  
Ted's why I'm not supposed to be here?  
... He's your boyfriend?

Lauren nods, "yes," sadly, almost apologetically.

RAY  
(covering)  
I know. I was just playing.

Ray feigns a smile, but he's devastated by Ted's presence.

RAY  
They didn't have two percent.

He hands Lauren the milk, turns and leaves. Lauren watches him go

**END OF 1ST SCENE**

EXT. MANHATTAN BUILDING - MORNING (ONE HOUR LATER)

~~Ray is now standing in front of an aged brick building -- a  
metal plaque on the wall reads DANESSEE MEDICAL BUILDING.~~

~~A WOMAN'S VOICE (V.O.)  
It's good to see you again, though I  
can't say you look so great.~~

~~RAY (V.O.)  
I'm working a case now. Tired. It's  
what I should be focused on.~~

MATCH TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT PSYCHOLOGIST'S OFFICE - DAY

~~Ray sits in a chair across from an attractive woman. This is  
psychologist CHERYL MATTHEWS (34) -- tough, NY style  
therapist. This is Ray's departmental 'review' in progress.~~

~~RAY  
Don't even now why I'm here. There's  
nothing wrong.~~

~~CHERYL  
So they send the 'nothing wrong with  
cops' to me?~~

~~RAY  
The idiots. Who knows why they do  
what they~~

# LAUREN

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## (2<sup>nd</sup> SCENE)

~~START~~  
INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - LATE NIGHT

The clock ticks endlessly. Soft ocean sounds play from a New Age meditation CD. Ray stares at the ceiling. Wide awake. The apartment buzzer rings. Ray climbs from his bed, so tired.

FRONT DOOR: Ray opens it to find --

LAUREN

Hey.

RAY

Hey. What are you doing here?

LAUREN

I wanted to just see you.

An awkward beat between them. Then --

LAUREN

I couldn't sleep. Haven't much lately.

RAY

Join the club.

LAUREN

Ray, I'm sorry for what I said the other night... if I hurt you.

RAY

You were mad.

LAUREN

I just miss Maddie... us. But everything, it's so different now.

*(a thought)*

You remember Maddie's snowglobe? Inside, I think, was a house, a tree, a dog on the grass - it was a perfect little world in there. Then it fell off the shelf and broke into a thousand pieces. For the life of me, I could never remember what it looked like. I only know it looked perfect, then it was gone. Does that sound crazy?

RAY

It was a reindeer, not a dog. And a castle, no house. And no. It all sounds just about right.

LAUREN

I want you to be better. But I can't have you ruin my life.

FYI

RAY

I'm not trying to ruin your life. I'm trying to become a part of it again.

(then)

I told her. I told her for you.

LAUREN

What do you mean? Told who what?

Ray just stands there -- he wants to tell her so badly -- he needs to share this secret with someone else --

RAY

I told, Maddie. I told her I couldn't see her anymore. That I had to let go of her to get you back.

Lauren stills -- she's careful now -- empathetic -- she knows what Ray's saying and it scares her a bit.

LAUREN

You see her, Ray?

Now a flood of tears from Ray's eyes -- but he's not sad. The tears are almost tears of joy.

RAY

Yes. I see her.

And now Lauren begins to cry.

LAUREN

But she's not real, Ray.

RAY

I know she's not real, but my time with her is. She comes to me and we talk, and then I am who I used to be. Those are the times when everything is okay.

LAUREN

Ray.... ?

RAY

I can smell her, Lauren... watermelon lip gloss... chocolate suckers... I smell your perfume on her... roses....

And then a realization hits Ray --

RAY

But I don't know if I can let go of her... not even for you.

Lauren just looks at him. Maybe for the first time, ever, she realizes just how hurt Ray is.

LAUREN  
Maybe you need her, then? Just for awhile... 'til you get past this.

Lauren takes him in her arms, kisses him deeply, whispers --

LAUREN  
It's gonna be okay, Ray.

They pull away, and in their eyes, we see a tiny glimpse of hope. Lauren turns and walks on down the hall.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

**END**

Pedestrians can't help but glance at the wearied figure who trudges toward the subway stop. It's Ray, circles beneath his eyes. He heads down into the bowels of the subway, # 7 line.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - NIGHT

Ray walks on board an empty car. He finds a seat -- leans onto a rail, exhausted gripping him.

Just before the subway car's close, a pair of tiny legs pass through the door.

The train rumbles and parts from the station. We PULL WIDE TO reveal -- MADDIE. Ray sees her and smiles.

MADDIE  
I know you couldn't leave me, Daddy.

RAY  
No. I want you to stay with me.

MADDIE  
For how long?

RAY  
For every day of forever.

Maddie moves to sit next to her father. She tucks her head into the crook of his arm and shoulder.

As the subway moves, the rumble of the steel machine cradles Ray and Maddie... rocking them gently and quickly, easily, they fall asleep together.

FADE TO BLACK

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